MARVEL COMICS
THE PUNISHER 2099
26 MAR
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THE MENACE OF THE MANTO
DIRECT EDITION
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PLEASE, PULL THE TRIGGER, PUNISHER... I REALLY MEAN IT.
YOU'RE SERIOUS... EXPLAIN!
DO YOU REALLY THINK I HARVESTED ALL THIS DEATH ENERGY FOR NOTHING?
I AM NOT SIMPLY A RELIGIOUS FANATIC... I AM A SCIENTIST OF THE GREAT WHEEL.
WHEN I DIE, ENERGY IS RELEASED SUFFICIENT TO PROPEL ME BEYOND MORTALITY. NO UNWANTED REINCARNATIONS.
I WILL BE REBORN... AS A GOD!
YOU'RE BLUFFING!
NO, NO--NOT AT ALL... OUR SOULS ARE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC ENERGY THAT SURVIVE DEATH.
MINE IS SPECIAL-- MANY MURDERS MAKE ME STRONG. NOW PULL THE TRIGGER. I GROW IMPATIENT.
SUPPOSING MANITOU IS RIGHT? WELL, IF THERE IS AN AFTER LIFE, HE ISN'T GETTING THERE.
I'VE GOT TO FIGURE SOME WAY OF DESTROYING HIM... BODY AND SOUL!

I'VE CALLED THE BLACK AMBULANCE AND LOADED THE CREEP ABOARD.
NOW I MUST FIGURE OUT MY NEXT MOVE... I'LL TALK THIS OVER WITH MATT.
MATT... HOW DO YOU KILL ELECTROMAGNETIC ENERGY?
YOU CAN'T. ELECTROMAGNETIC ISN'T STRICTLY SPEAKING ALIVE. IT CAN BE FOCUSED, CONDENSED, SCRAMBLED...
THE TROUBLE WITH MATT IS, HE'S LIKE A COMPUTER... YOU'VE GOT TO PROGRAM HIM WITH THE RIGHT QUESTION TO GET THE RIGHT ANSWER.
NO--I MEAN... DESTROYED! OBLITERATED! NOT CHANGED... NOT MESSED WITH...
...JUST GONE!
WHAT A STRANGE QUESTION... IT RAISES MANY INTERESTING CONCEPTUAL PARADOXES AT THE SUB-ATOMIC LEVEL...
LOOK... ALL I WANT TO KNOW IS WHAT KIND OF GUN DOES IT TAKE,...AND WHERE DO I GET ONE?
CALL ME BACK WHEN YOU'VE GOT THE ANSWER.
CARRY ON, PUNISHER ...THIS IS VERY AMUSING.
...I MAY AS WELL ENJOY MY LAST MOMENTS OF PHYSICAL REALITY BEFORE I DON THE MANTLE OF GODHOOD!
ESPECIALLY AS I HAVE SENT OUT HYPNO-PULSES... MAKING US A TARGET FOR EVERY MURDEROUS CRIMINAL IN NEW YORK!

HIS FAMILY WAS MURDERED BY A PSYCHOPATH IN AN AGE WHERE JUSTICE CAN BE BOUGHT AND NO ONE BELIEVES IN OLD-FASHIONED PUNISHMENT ANYMORE... NO ONE EXCEPT JAKE GALLOWS... A WEAPONS SPECIALIST IN THE PUBLIC EYE POLICE FORCE BY DAY, AT NIGHT HE IS INCORRUPTIBLE JUSTICE.
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
THE PUNISHER 2099
"EVEN AS WE SPEAK, MUGGERS ARE LEAVING THEIR VICTIMS...
...PSYCHOPATHS SPARING THEIR PREY...
...STREET GANGS PAUSING IN BATTLE...
...ALL IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN TO SLAUGHTERING THE PAIR OF US!"
SUICIDE RUN!

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THE PUNISHER IS NOW THE MOST WANTED MAN IN THIS CITY!
"AND HERE COME INTERESTING ADVERSARIES... DEATH JOGGERS!"
KILL PUNISHER! KILL PUNISHER!
BRAKA BRAKA
BRAKA
THOR'S BLOOD! THEY CAN REALLY MOVE IN THOSE SPEED-STILTS!
RIPPPP
NOW I KILL YOU!

YEAH, RIGHT.
BLAM!
KILL THE PUN--
AAAAGH!
ON SECOND THOUGHT... LEAVE PUNISHER UNTIL LATER... FINISH ME OFF FIRST!
THERE ARE MANY OF US... WE WILL KILL YOU!
MUST OBEY...
NO YOU DON'T, BOZO..HE LIVES UNTIL I FIND A WAY TO KILL HIM PROPERLY!
THAT'S IT... GET THOSE PINCERS AROUND MY NECK AND SQUEEZE!
YOU KNOW SOMETHING...

...YOU'RE BEGINNING TO GET ON MY NERVES!
SKRUNCH
I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO KILL YOU--YET...
...BUT I CAN STILL GIVE YOU A LOT OF PUNISHMENT!
AND PUT YOU OUT OF COMMISSION FOR A WHILE!
NOT ANOTHER ONE!
DEATH OR GLORY!

YOU LIKE SHARP BLADES, KID?
BZZZ
KLIK
KLIK
HHUMP!
CHECK OUT MY "DEATH SUPPORT SYSTEM"! TRY SOME AUTO-SURGERY!
AIEEEEHH!

YOU MERELY POSTPONE THE INEVITABLE...WE BOTH DIE...BUT MY SOUL WILL RETURN AS A MIGHTY DARK GOD..
...BUT NOT YOU, PUNISHER..
"...YOU'RE JUST IGNORANT, PSYCHIC REFUSE...ALL YOU ARE IS ANGER, PAIN...AND THE NEED FOR REVENGE!
THAT DOESN'T DO VERY WELL ON THE GREAT WHEEL OF ETERNITY."
JAKE...GOT SOME ANSWERS FOR YOU. YOU WANTED A WEAPON...WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT WILL DO IT--A BIG GUN...A VERY, VERY BIG GUN!
KEEP TALKING, MATT... BIG GUNS ARE MY LANGUAGE.
THEN HOW ABOUT THIS...? THE BARREL'S THIRTY MILES LONG AND THE BULLETS TRAVEL AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT!
SUCH A THING EXISTS?
YEP... IT'S THE ALCHEMAX NEGATRON PARTICLE ACCELERATOR IN NEW JERSEY... JUST FIVE MILES AWAY.
NOW WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DESTROY ELECTRO-MAGNETIC ENERGY FOR?
'CAUSE I'VE GOT A CREEP HERE THAT THINKS IT'S WHAT HIS SOUL'S MADE OF...FIGURE'S IF I KILL HIM, HE'LL GO ON TO SOME OTHER STATE OF BEING.

JAKE, HE'S TRULY DERANGED..
...BUT HE MAY HAVE A POINT... ONE OF THE BIG FEARS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WAS THAT THE SOULS OF VICTIMS OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS DIDN'T SURVIVE...
...THEY WERE SCRAMBLED BY THE ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE!
HEAR THAT, MYRDALF? NOT SO IGNORANT NOW, AM I ... ?
...I'M GONNA BET ME A GUN THAT SHOOTS SOULS TO DEATH!
NO! NO! WHAT... WHAT KIND OF MAN ARE YOU, PUNISHER?
MUST... MUST KILL MYSELF! ESCAPE THIS MADNESS!
IF I CAN JUST REACH THIS BROKEN GLASS..
KRASH!
NICE TRY.

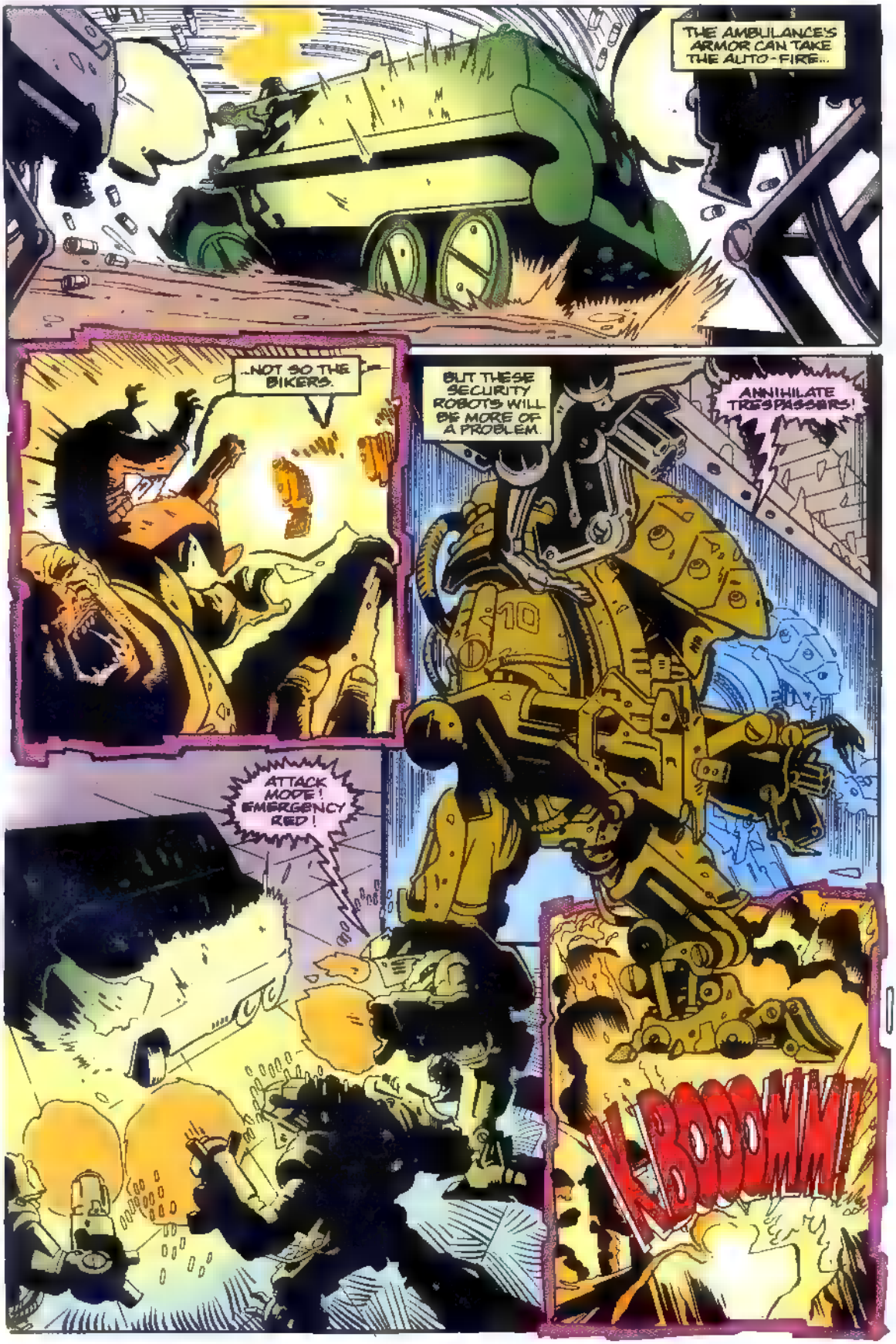
PLEASE...TAKE MY GOLD CARD...YOU CAN CLEAN MY ACCOUNT OUT...JUST SPARE OUR LIVES!
WE'LL CERTAINLY CLEAN OUT YOUR ACCOUNT, BUT WE AIN'T GONNA SPARE YOUR LIFE!
IT'S NOT THE MONEY OR THE KILLING THAT DRAWS ME TO THIS EXCITING LIFESTYLE...
GUESS WHAT IT IS?
OH, SHOCK! PLEASE--NO!
"PLEASE--NO!" MY FAVORITE APHRODISIAC!
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE QUICK AND IT'S NOT GOING TO BE NICE...
THE LIGHT!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
LEAVE THEM... THEY'RE NOTHING... KILL THE PUNISHER!
YES... MUST KILL...
MUST KILL PUNISHER...

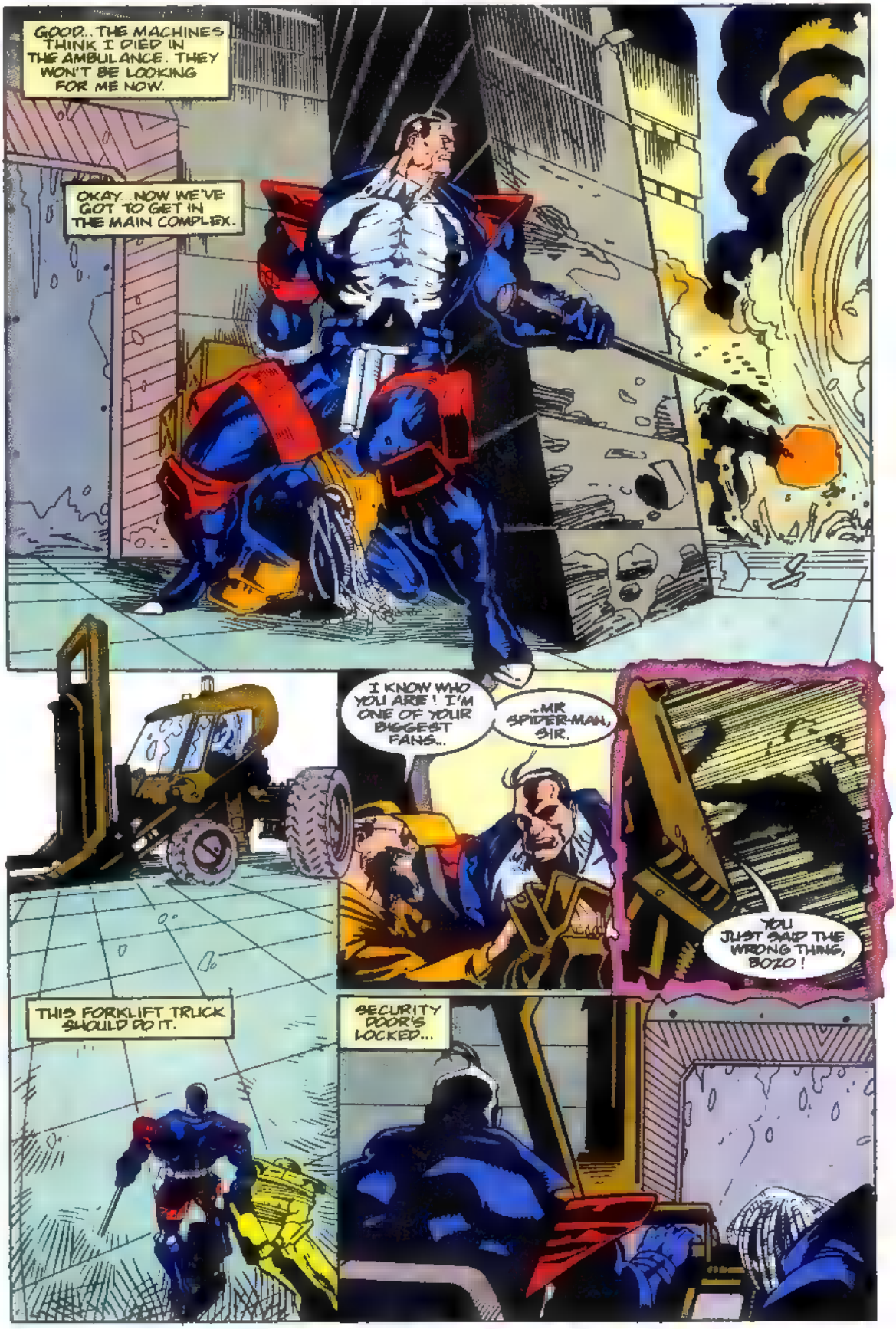
MUST KILL THE PUNISHER!
STARK ANGELS! EX-MILITARY. VETERANS OF THE POLLUTION WARS..TOTAL PSYCHOS WHO NEVER STOPPED KILLING.
ATTACK US! KILL US BOTH!
THEY'LL STOP KILLING NOW.
SKREECH!

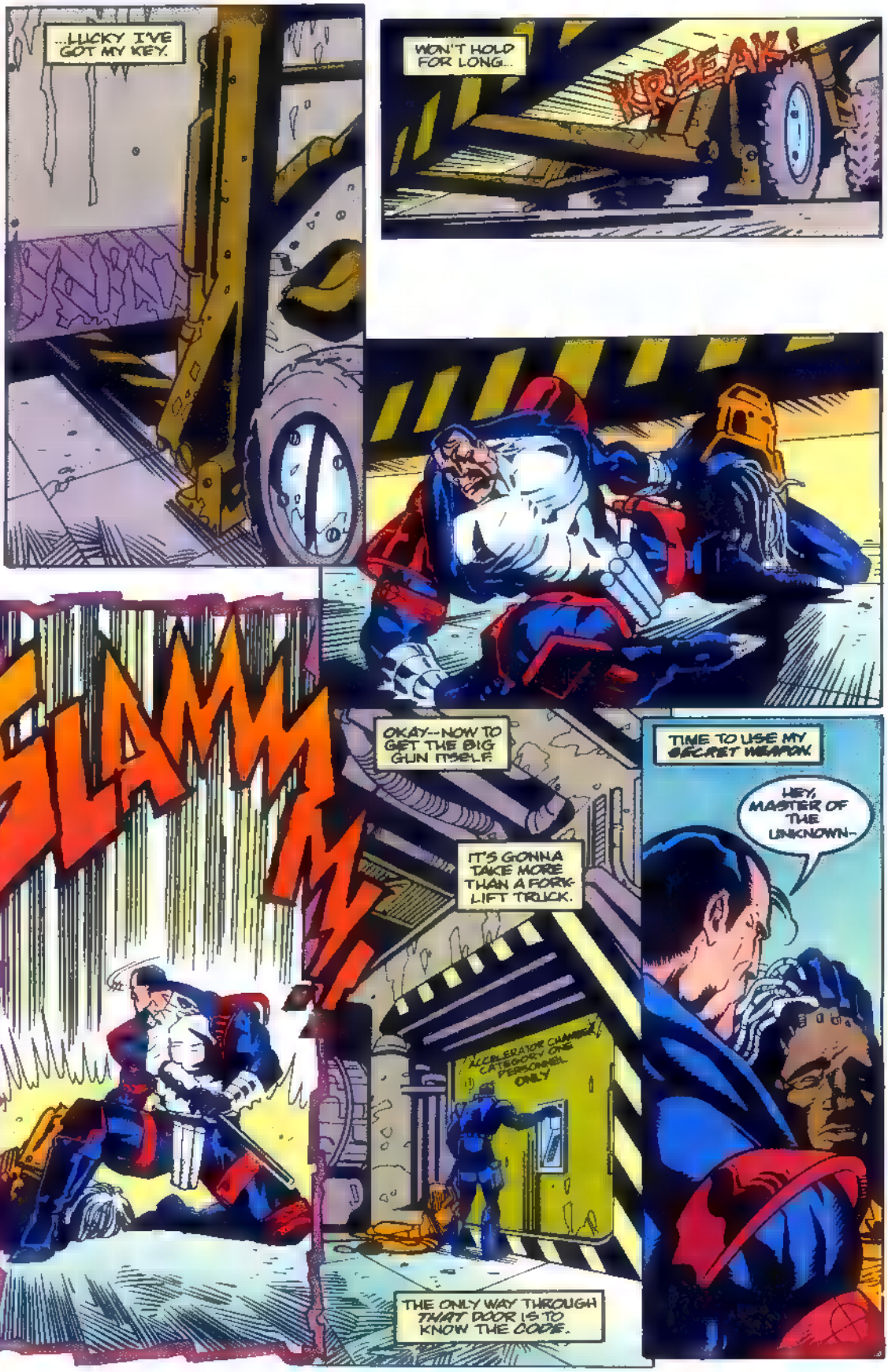
AAAAHH!
SK-SMASH!
THAT'S TAKEN CARE OF SOME OF THEM...
...NOW WHERE DID THE REST GO?
GET 'ROUND THE OTHER SIDE...AND SLAP A MINE ON HIM!
OKAY--
--IT BLOWS IN SIXTY SECONDS!
SHOCK! BETTER PUT THE AMBULANCE ON AUTO!

NOW THEN... MR. "GREAT WHEEL" SHAMAN... SLEEP RIGHT ON, WHILE I GO OUTSIDE AND WIPE THE SCUM OFF MY VEHICLE!
UUUGGHH
THAT HURTS!
THOK!
HERE--PRESENT FOR YOU!

OOOOOOOO
K-BOOM!!
AH! HERE COMES THE COMPLEX NOW.
HALT! CHANGE COURSE...YOU HAVE FIVE SECONDS TO COMPLY!
THIS COULD BE A WAY TO FINISH OFF THE STARK BIKERS.
WHIRRRRR


THE AMBULANCE'S ARMOR CAN TAKE THE AUTO-FIRE...
..NOT SO THE BIKERS.
BUT THESE SECURITY ROBOTS WILL BE MORE OF A PROBLEM.
ANNIHILATE TRESPASSERS!
ATTACK MODE! EMERGENCY RED!
BOOOMM!


GOOD...THE MACHINES THINK I DIED IN THE AMBULANCE. THEY WON'T BE LOOKING FOR ME NOW.
OKAY...NOW WE'VE GOT TO GET IN THE MAIN COMPLEX.
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE! I'M ONE OF YOUR BIGGEST FANS...
...MR SPIDER-MAN, SIR.
YOU JUST SAID THE WRONG THING, BOZO!
THIS FORKLIFT TRUCK SHOULD DO IT.
SECURITY DOOR'S LOCKED...

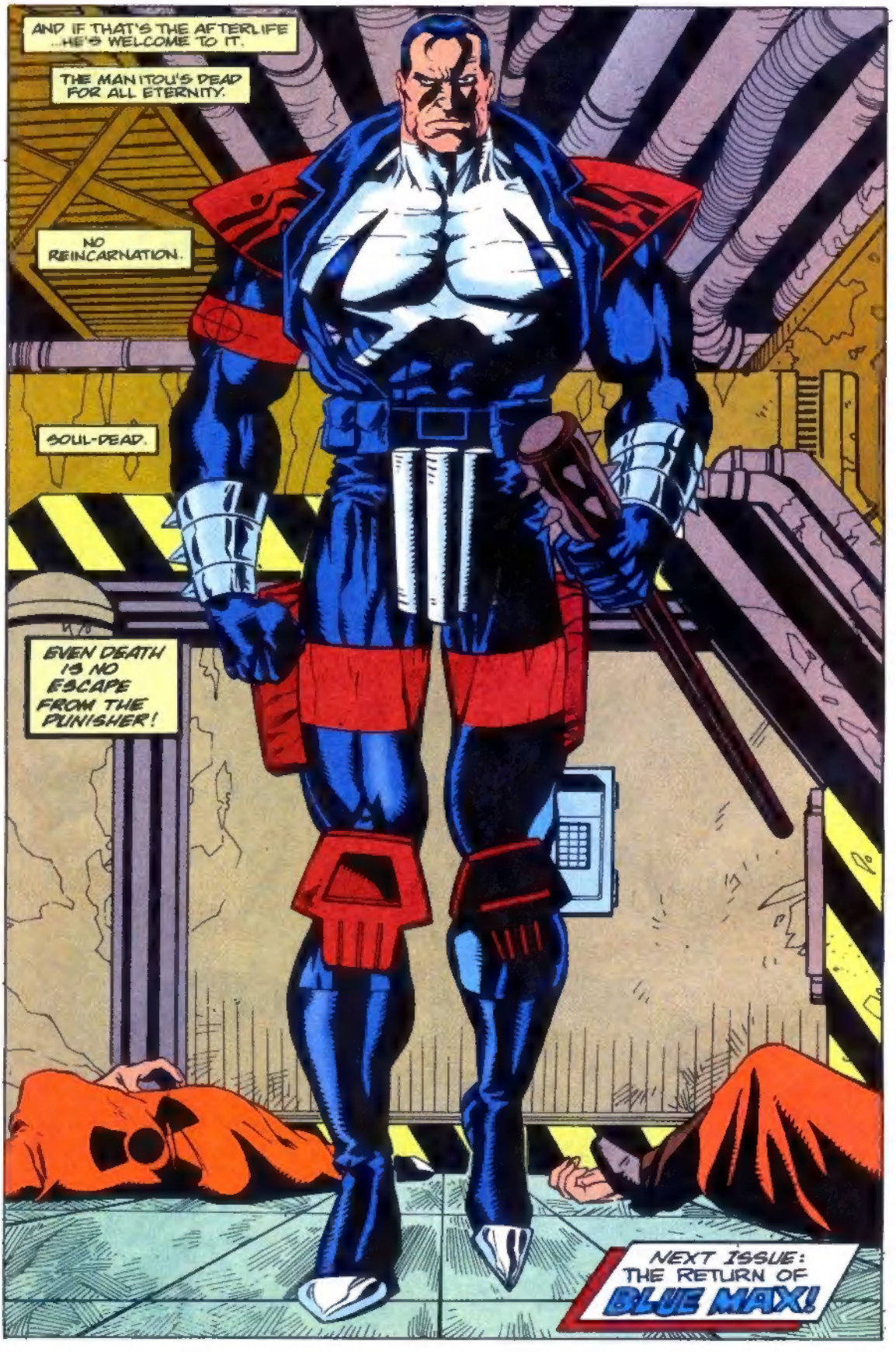

...LUCKY I'VE GOT MY KEY.
WON'T HOLD FOR LONG...
KREEAK!
SLAMM!
OKAY--NOW TO GET THE BIG GUN ITSELF.
IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN A FORK-LIFT TRUCK.
ACCELERATOR CHAMBER CATEGORY ONE PERSONNEL ONLY
THE ONLY WAY THROUGH THAT DOOR IS TO KNOW THE CODE.
TIME TO USE MY SECRET WEAPON.
HEY, MASTER OF THE UNKNOWN--

HUUUUH...? SHOCK! STILL ALIVE!
ATTACK! ALL MUST ATTACK! KILL THE PUNISHER!
KILL THE PUNISHER!
OPEN THE DOOR!
KILL THE PUNISHER!
OH, NO! THEY'VE GOT CLIPBOARDS AND PENS! I'M FINISHED!
NOTHING A GOOD POWER-BATTING CAN'T DEAL WITH!

OKAY... I'M IN.
HERE'S WHERE THEY CONVERT THE COBALT AND HELIUM INTO GRAVARIUM... BY BOMBARDING THEM WITH ACCELERATED PARTICLES...
...SUPER BULLETS.
NOW ACCORDING TO MATT, I HAVE TO STICK THE SHAMAN IN THE TARGET CHAMBER...
...THEN REPROGRAM THE GUN TO TURN THE SHAMAN - SPIRIT AND ALL - INTO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.
NO! KILL YOURSELF, PUNISHER!
"TAKE YOUR GUN AND POINT IT AT YOUR FOREHEAD."
"DO IT!"
"NOW PULL THE TRIGGER... BLOW YOUR BRAINS OUT!"

"END THE TORMENT OF DAILY EXISTENCE... ENJOY THE PEACE OF OBLIVION."
WHY DIDN'T I SEE IT THIS WAY BEFORE? IT MAKES SO MUCH SENSE!
YES! YES! I READ YOUR MIND... YOU *WERE* RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR FAMILY'S DEATH...YOU COULD HAVE SAVED THEM...
...PUNISH *YOURSELF!*
PUNISH MYSELF...
MYSELF?!
YOU KNOW YOU REALLY HAD ME UP TO THAT POINT.
FOR A HYPNOTIST, YOU'RE A LOUSY PSYCHOLOGIST!

THE PARTICLES FLY AROUND THE THIRTY MILE LONG CIRCULAR GUN BARREL.. ACCELERATING ALL THE TIME.. UNTIL THEY REACH NEARLY THE SPEED OF LIGHT.
THEN EMERGE AS A BEAM...
AAAUUUGH!
...WHICH HITS THE TARGET.. FIRSTLY KILLING HIM...
...THEN REDUCING HIS BODY TO ITS COMPONENT PARTS..
...AND FINALLY NOT EVEN A PUFF OF SMOKE IS LEFT.
JUST RANDOM DISORGANIZED ENERGY BEING ABSORBED INTO THE WALLS OF THE CHAMBER.


AND IF THAT'S THE AFTERLIFE ...HE'S WELCOME TO IT.
THE MANITOU'S DEAD FOR ALL ETERNITY.
NO REINCARNATION.
SOUL-DEAD.
EVEN DEATH IS NO ESCAPE FROM THE PUNISHER!
NEXT ISSUE: THE RETURN OF BLUE MAX!